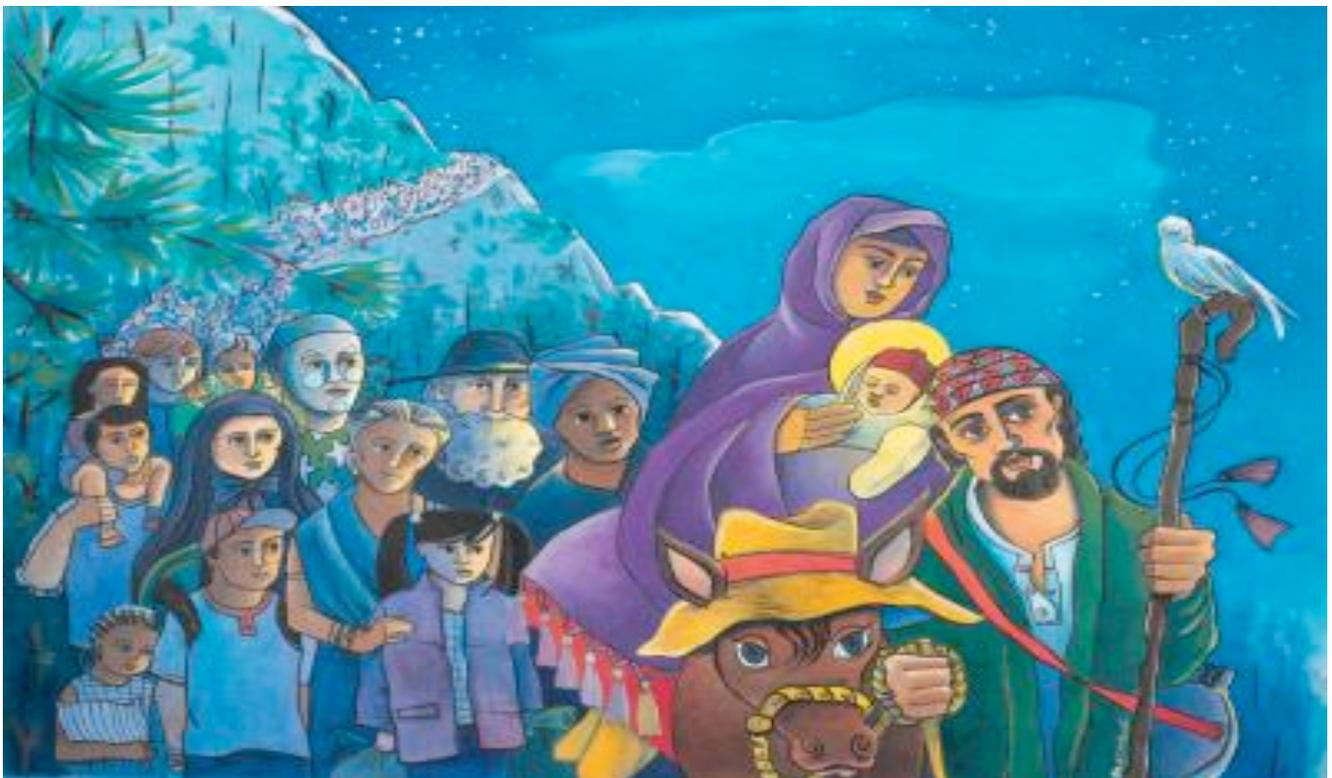


The Diocese of Wangaratta
The Anglican Parish of Kilmore
with Broadford, Pyalong & Tallarook
29th December 2013
First Sunday after Christmas

*Wishing you all a safe and prosperous
New Year*



Hymns: 290, 292, Pewsheet, 293



Introit Hymn

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

And also with you.

We are the body of Christ.

His Spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

The Liturgy continues on page 119 Green Prayer Book

SENTENCE

I bring you tidings of a great joy for all people; to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, Christ the Lord. *Luke 2 10-11.*

THE COLLECT

All glory to you, gracious God, for the gift of your son, whom you sent to be our Emmanuel. With the angels, let us praise your name, and tell the earth his story, that all may believe, rejoice, and proclaim your love; through him, the Christ child, born to us Lord and Saviour, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Isaiah 63. 7-9

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

I will tell of the kindnesses of the Lord, the deeds for which he is to be praised, according to all the Lord has done for us – yes, the many good things he has done for Israel, according to his compassion and many kindnesses. He said, ‘Surely they are my people, children who will be true to me’; and so he became their Saviour. In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 148

Response: Praise the Lord from the heavens and praise him in the heights.

Colin Mawby

Response

v. 1 Praise the Lord from the hea - vens and praise him in the heights.



Praise the Lord, praise the Lord from heaven:

O praise him in the heights.

Praise him, all his angels: O praise him, all his host./R

Praise him, sun and moon:

praise him, all you stars of light.

Praise him, you highest heaven:

and you waters that are above the heavens./R

Let them praise the name of the Lord:

for he commanded and they were made.

He established them for ever and ever:

he made an ordinance which shall not pass away./R

O praise the Lord from the earth:
praise him, you sea-monsters and all deeps;
Fire and hail, mist and snow:
and storm-wind fulfilling his command;/R
Mountains and all hills: fruit trees and all cedars;
Beasts of the wild, and all cattle:
creeping things and winged birds;/R

Kings of the earth, and all peoples:
princes, and all rulers of the world;
Young men and maidens: old folk and children together.
Let them praise the name of the Lord./R

For his name alone is exalted, his glory is above earth and heaven:
and he has lifted high the horn of his people.
Therefore he is the praise of all his servants:
of the children of Israel, a people that is near him. Praise the Lord./R

SECOND READING

Hebrews 2. 10-18

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered. Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. He says, 'I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters; in the assembly I will sing your praises.' And again, 'I will put my trust in him.' And again he says, 'Here am I, and the children God has given me.' Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil – and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

The word became flesh and | dwelt among us,
and we have | seen his glory.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I have called my son.' When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: 'A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more. When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead. Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, 'He will be called a Nazorean.'

For the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Come Lord Jesus, light of the world. Shine into our lives like the Bethlehem star - and reveal your truth and grace. Dawn on our darkness like the rising sun - and renew our faith and hope. Scatter the shadows with your Spirit's fire - and banish our shame and fear. Fill us with the glory the angels sang, and let us live like beacons of your love.

God of love; **hear our prayer.**

Loving God, we praise you for the prophets who told us to wait in hope, for the word you gave them has always come true. We pray for the Church celebrating the wonder of your love; for our Bishop John, and our parish as we rejoice and proclaim glad tidings to all.

God of love; **hear our prayer.**

We praise you for signs of peace and hope in this our world, bereft and broken by war and aggression; we pray for the people of Syria, South Sudan, Ukraine; for the victims of domestic violence and abuse; for those who see violence as a solution to problems; for those nations divided by histories of rivalry and

conflict: those in the Middle East, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan. We pray for all who are captive, those who flee, refugees and asylum seekers.

God of love; **hear our prayer.**

Lord Jesus we thank you for our families, with all their tensions and awkwardness; for days that go well, when we feel proud and hopeful and warmly embraced; for times when we love beyond question; and for memories of courage and joy, when we see skills and values and character passing and growing from generation to generation. Heal us of hurts and jealousies, and help us to see you in the faces around our table, to hear your voice in those family phone calls and to know your presence in comfortable silence - for you are our Emmanuel, "God with us", making every meal holy, and every family member a child of God.

God of love; **hear our prayer.**

Lord Jesus be with those who have no one to share this festive season, those for whom Christmas brings no joy; for those in need; those living with grief, pain and illness; for the dying and those who wait with them. Come amongst your people that you light may shine in the darkness of fear and distress. We pray for those on our hearts at this time and those who have requested prayer.

Heather Turnbull, Chris Schafer, David Flower, Tom Scrivens, Glen Turnbull, Darren Winfield, Norma Hedley, Justin Quigg, Kelly Quigg, Karen Goodger, Michael Farrell, David Parsons, Matthew, Nicole, Alex Impols, May McCormack, Dawn McCormack, Carol Boase, Lyn Ryan, Linda, Bruce Mitchell, Fr Michael Nelson, Mark Bennetts, Mandy, Seth Gunther, Adrian Walsh, Cliff & Glenda Stomann, Tom, Sandra & Bianca Davidson, Peter Cannon, Alma Smith, Suresh Jain.

God of love; **hear our prayer.**

Lord, the whole company of heaven sings your praise; we pray for those who have died in your love, for those who have died violently; and for those who have died forgotten and unmourned and for your faithful people from this parish With all your saints, with Joseph and blessed Mary and all whom you love, may we come at last to live in your the joy of your eternal presence. We commend to you the recently departed and those whose years mind occurs at this time.

Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord; **and let light perpetual shine upon them.**

God of love; **hear our prayer.**

Lord, help us to see that the power of Christmas isn't exhausted with the music and the lights and the gifts and the food, but grows as slowly as a baby, to become a living treasure, a reservoir of peace and love, to sustain us, not only now and into the holidays, but each and every day of the days you grant us. Indeed, O Lord, bless us as we pray for ourselves and those we love..... we pray as your son Jesus, he who is our brother and Lord taught us, saying... **Our Father...**[pg.124]

Year's mind: Today we remember before God those whose anniversary of death occurs this week: 30th Derrick Davies, William Sherwood; 31st Vera Robinette, Lewis Nyman (Priest); 2nd Jan Lenard Lang; 3rd Kathleen Smith; 4th Arthur Dean.

Saint's Days and Holy Days: 30th Josephine Butler; social reformer (d. 1905); 1 Jan The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus; 2nd Basil of Ceasarea (d. 379 and Gregory of Nazianzus (d.389).

Hymn: Tidings of Comfort and Joy

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. To Bethlehem, a stable bare,
We journey to behold
The baby born to change the world.
The story has been told.
He brings the lonely to his side.
He makes the timid bold.
O Tidings of comfort and joy
Comfort and joy
O Tidings of comfort and joy. | 2. The lowest class was first to hear;
Downtrodden, they were poor;
For shepherds were despised, oppressed;
No rights before the law.
Yet these are those who come to Christ
To worship and adore.
O Tidings of comfort and joy
Comfort and joy
O Tidings of comfort and joy. |
| 3. The priestly gift of frankincense
Was 'holy' to the Lord.
Gold for a king, Myrrh for the grave,
Gifts we could not afford
Are brought to Jesus at his birth
By princes from abroad.
O Tidings of comfort and joy
Comfort and joy
O Tidings of comfort and joy. | 4. So rich and poor in every time
Are welcome at the stall;
The ones who count and those ignored,
The strong and those who fall;
For Jesus is the love of God
Out-flowing for us all.
O Tidings of comfort and joy
Comfort and joy
O Tidings of comfort and joy. |

Reflections on the Readings

Christmas: Jesus, Caesar and Us

The conflict between “Jesus and Caesar” is a major even if most often overlooked theme of the Christmas stories in the Bible. In Matthew, King Herod the Rome-appointed ruler of the Jewish homeland seeks to kill the new-born Jesus. Luke emphasises – especially but not only in Mary’s “Magnificat” – that what is happening in the advent of Jesus is the bringing down of the powerful from their thrones and the wealthy from their place of privilege. Both stories announce the conflict that continues throughout the gospels and climaxes in Jesus’s execution by Caesar, that is, by Roman authority. Good Friday was Caesar’s “no” to Jesus – and Easter is God’s “yes” to Jesus and God’s “no” to Caesar. Thus Advent and Christmas should be for Christians a time of reflection about the relationship between loyalty to Jesus and loyalty to Caesar. To say the obvious, “Caesar” has a particular historical meaning: it referred to the emperor of Rome. Think of the most famous: Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus. But even psychopaths like the

emperor Caligula bore the title. And it has become a more universal term. In some languages, it continued to refer to emperors for more than a thousand years after the fall of the Roman Empire – for example, Kaiser and Czar as recently as a hundred years ago. In its more than specific ancient Roman meaning, “Caesar” refers to domination systems, large or small. In the pre-modern world, they ranged in size from empires to small kingdoms and at the micro-level the family. All are about people of privilege- the powerful and wealthy and, at the micro-level of the family, men being in charge. The Bible is a sustained conversation – indeed opposition – between those who challenged Caesar (and Pharaoh and the monarchy and the empires that followed) and those who accommodated themselves to Caesar and his ways. For Christians, Christmas is about the Word becoming flesh, to use language from the magnificent prologue to John, one of the two gospels that do not have a birth story. And yet John does. “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” is his one verse story of Jesus’s birth. Jesus enfleshes, embodies, incarnates, God’s Word, God’s revelation, God’s character and passion in a human life. Christmas means that for Christians, Jesus is and should be decisive. What we see in him, the Word made flesh, is our revelation, our light in the darkness. And that revelation, that light, that embodiment, led to conflict with Caesar, Jesus’s execution by Caesar, and Jesus’s vindication by God. Finally: in addition to referring to domination systems, “Caesar” for many Christians and others shaped by Christian language has become a symbol, a metaphor, for “government” – as if government, a central power, locally or nationally, were the problem. But the conflict between Caesar and Jesus (and other major voices in the Bible) is not about government being intrinsically bad. Government by itself is not the problem. We cannot live in ungoverned societies. The issue is what kind of government. The record of Christians is not particularly impressive. Most Christians for 1500 years or so have supported the powers that be. In the last hundred years, more than a majority of German Christians supported the Third Reich in the time of Hitler. In the United States in the first decade of this century, the demographic group giving the largest support to the war in Iraq were white evangelicals who attended church once or more a week. Neither uncritical support nor uncritical rejection of government is the answer. There are important differences between the powers that be. Some are more humane – and thus more consistent with “the Word become flesh” in Jesus, the passion of God revealed in a human life. And some are about the endorsement and preservation of power for the privileged. So: Christmas – like Good Friday and Easter – is a time of reflection about Jesus and Caesar. How do we see the passion of God as revealed in Jesus? What should “this world” – our humanly constructed world – be like? That is what Christmas is about. Of course it is also about light in the darkness, reconnection with God by returning from our exile, and the fulfillment of our deepest yearnings. But those yearnings, according to the Old Testament and the birth stories and the gospels are not primarily about life beyond death. They are about a different kind of world, here below, here and now. Why are many Christians – unwilling to embrace that? The reason might be Caesar or Jesus. To whom does our loyalty lie?

Notices

Your attention is drawn to the Pastoral letter from Bishop John posted on the notice board.

The Rector on Leave - Fr Kim will be away for the next two weeks back on 18th January. Fr John Young will be locum for Sunday services only. For pastoral issues please contact one of the Wardens.

Thank you to everyone for the support and hard work in preparing for our Christmas celebrations, and to everyone for the wonderful Festival of Lessons and Carols at Christ Church last Sunday.

Back the Front Christmas Tree - Thank you for all the gifts donated from individuals and the St Matthew's Friendship Group - the gifts were distributed by Anglicare to help families in need.

St Matthews Street Raffle - Thank you to all who sold tickets and donated to the St Matthew's street raffle, which raised \$1,202 for parish funds-a great effort.

Festival of Lessons and Carols Hamper Raffle raised \$227 which will cover almost all our costs.

Annual Reports - the Parish Annual General Meeting will be held 9th March 2014. Annual reports need to be prepared and given to Caroline by end of January 2014.

Retiring Collections & Appeals - Please continue to support the Bishop's

NSW Bushfire Appeal & the ABM Philippines Appeal

Next Sunday: 5th January 2014 : THE EPIPHANY		
Isaiah 60.1-6; Ps 72. 1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3. 1-12; Matthew 2. 1-12		
Christ Church	9am	Holy Eucharist
St Matthews	11am	Holy Eucharist
St Stephens	11am	Morning Prayer
Transfiguration	4pm	No service this day

Parish Clergy:

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